

## RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM (RTP)

### IN NEBRASKA

- RTP was created in 1992 through the Federal Highway Bill (first known as the Symms Act, then ISTEA, now SAFETEA-LU) of the Federal Highway Administration, with the funding starting in 1993.
- Nebraska's Recreational Trails Program has funded 112 projects since 1993 (includes 2010 projects), for a total of \$9,931,410 in federal funds. Approximately \$12.3 million has gone into these projects when factoring in the local match for each project.
- This program's fund must be divided three ways; 30% of the funding goes to non-motorized trail projects, 30% of the funding goes to motorized trail projects, and 40% of the funding goes to diversified/multi-use trails.



**South Park Pond Trail-Schuyler, NE**

- This program is an 80/20 split, where Federal Highway will reimburse up to 80% of the project costs.

- Nebraska has chosen to put a cap on requests at \$150,000. However, if justification is provided and a request is made, it can be determined that the maximum amount can be waived. The minimum grant request must be \$20,000.

- The program applicants

must be political subdivision of Nebraska or the federal government.

- This program funds trails that are recreational in nature as opposed to transportation-oriented trails.
- Projects in Nebraska have included hike/bike trails, snowmobile trails, canoe access points, equestrian trails, cross county skiing trails, trail bridges, ATV trails, and trailhead facilities.
- Projects can be for trail renovations, trail maintenance, new trail construction, trail bridge construction, land acquisition for trails, and educational and safety

### **Native Nature Trail-Village of Santee**



projects related to trails.

- Over 50 communities, natural resource districts, federal agencies, public power districts, schools and Nebraska Game and Parks has received funding from this program. Communities include small villages with less than 500 people to the large metropolitan areas in the state.



- RTP in Nebraska usually funds 8-10 projects per year, depending on the amount of funds available from the Federal Highway Administration.

- The deadline for applications is always on the first business day of October each year for the following year's funding. In October 2010, applications will be accepted for the 2011 grant cycle.

- All projects are reviewed by Game and Parks staff and are contacted within one week of submittal of the project on items missing in the grant or need clarification.
- All projects are visited in October or early November by Game and Parks staff to do a site visit and photograph the potential project area.
- A committee made up of 11 voting members that represent different trail entities or providers in the State rank the projects.

The committee is made up of motorized and non-motorized trail interests as required by the Federal Highway Administration. (See the RTP Committee list on the web for all the members)

- The committee reviews all grants, ranks them and makes recommendations to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission Commissioners for their approval. The

Committee meeting is advertised and open to the public in November of each year. The Commissioners meeting is also a public meeting, in January to approve the ranking that the committee did.

- Notification of grant approval goes out in late January or early February.

